

RFSD Community UPDATE
From Judy Haptonstall
March 16, 2009

Roaring Fork School District Goals 2008-2009

- **Increase Learning for All Students and Close the Achievement Gap**
- **Implement Results Teams with Fidelity**
- **Implement Monitoring and Accountability Measures**



RFHS Staff and Administrators

Who would think you could get students to come to school on Saturdays? RFHS administrators Cliff Colia and Barbara Mason, along with several staff members thought it would be worth a try and have seen great success. Noting that they get all kinds of students to attend, this has proven to be as much a benefit for those students who are doing very well in school as is for those students who need some additional help in their classes. Teachers and administrators are volunteering their time to spend extra time with students on one Saturday a month and have seen some great results from this extraordinary effort! Your commitment to student learning is very much appreciated.

Instructional Focus –Fact vs Opinon – Through March 20th

An important lifelong skill, teachers across the district are encouraged to provide students with opportunities to become experts at separating fact from opinion through the reading and study of newspaper articles, essays, films, books, editorials, or documentaries. Teaching our students to be questioning and discriminating readers and viewers is key to making informed, accurate decisions on everything from what candidate to vote for to what product to purchase. Whether comparing and contrasting different versions of the same event, or creating a non-linguistic representation of the difference between the two, many of the instructional strategies we are focusing on this year lend themselves to an exciting and meaningful lesson for our students.

Zeros and Final Grades

The Board of Education recently identified seven essential elements of instruction in the Roaring Fork School District that we believe are key to effective instruction and learning for students. These practices are highly relevant to the standards based system that the district has embraced and are classroom practices that we will guarantee to every student and parent in our system. So far the weekly update has addressed the importance of providing our students models or guides to excellence before instruction begins, and involving students in setting their own goals for learning.

In terms of how a zero impacts a final grade for a student, in a traditional system, if students failed to do the work, they received a zero. Often, even if the work was made up, the best grade that was awarded was a C. In a standards based system, the intent is to communicate to parents and students through the report card the student's level of knowledge and skill acquisition. A zero translates to no evidence, rather than a lack of understanding. If I don't see the work, I have no idea what the student knows or understands. Not doing the work is reflected under a separate category entitled Learner Behaviors. It is of course important that students complete classroom and home work assignments. Learner Behaviors occupy an important place on the report cards so that parents know whether or not students are exhibiting those skills that help make students successful in school and in life.

Selection of Math Curriculum Finalized

The Math Curriculum Council started last spring by defining the math essentials, digging into the research regarding best practice in math, and coming to a common agreement regarding philosophy of teaching math. After countless hours spent reading, discussing research, evaluating materials, listening to presentations, and participating in thoughtful decision-making processes, they have chosen a new district math curriculum! Starting in the 2009/2010 school year, math curriculum in Roaring Fork District will be consistently implemented with more seamless transitions between elementary, middle, and high schools. Textbook evaluations focused largely on opportunity for integrated math and conceptual learning of math concepts. In the upcoming months, representatives on the Math Council will be modeling lessons and giving teachers the chance to explore the chosen materials. Every student in the district will have a math book and all applicable teachers will receive teacher's kits and materials. The K-8 curriculum is partnered with ExamVue, the assessment program the district will be purchasing, so teachers will have banks of questions aligned with CSAP assessment frameworks for creating common assessments tied directly with the curriculum. Initial training may be provided on June 1st with follow-up coaching and training next fall. Thanks to everyone involved in this process for your long hours and hard work to make these final selections.

Elementary - Investigations (Pearson/Scott Foresman)

Middle Schools - Connected Math Program (Pearson/Scott Foresman)

High Schools - Integrated Math Program (Key Curriculum Press)

Board of Education Agenda: Meeting Minutes from March 11, 2009

This meeting was held at Roaring Fork High School

- Executive Session
- Reports from staff and Board members
- Routine Personnel
- Recommendation for naming the Glenwood Springs High School Theater
 - The recommendation for naming the Glenwood Springs High School Theater after Jeannie Miller was approved
- Youth Zone Report
- Discussion of "wait list" parameters for Sopris and Basalt Elementary Schools
 - Information collected from Basalt Elementary parents who are currently attending and who are either from out of district or out of attendance areas indicated that only 13 students over the next six years would be seeking enrollment at BES and only two students would be enrolling at BES this fall if we grandfather in those families currently enrolled.
 - The Board asked staff to gather information regarding any families currently enrolled from of attendance area or out of district at the middle and high school to see what impact any siblings from those families might have on student enrollment at BES. Data will be collected by the Board meeting on March 25th.
- Policies

- Professional Staff Recruiting/Hiring – Passed on third reading
- Classified Staff Personal Leave – Passed on third reading

Calendar:

Parent Teacher Conferences – March 19th –No school for students

Staff Development for Classroom Instruction that Works – March 20th - No school for students

Upcoming Events:

Spring Break – March 30th through April 3rd

Regional Meeting of Elementary Principals – April 17th from 9:00-1:00 at the district office.

Training of Trainers for Classroom Instruction that Works – This final day of training has been moved from April 22nd to April 23rd to avoid a conflict with ACT testing in the high schools.

Of Special Note:

School Calendar for 2009-2010

For your future planning, the school calendar for 2009-2010 is available on the district web site at www.rfsd.k12.co.us. The calendar includes dates for Late Start Mondays, the beginning and end of school, and all of the school holidays. Copies of the calendars will be made available to schools for distribution once we have completed administrative hiring and can update the information located on the back side of the calendars that are distributed to parents before the end of school.

Did you know... That the Roaring Fork Family Resource Centers connect students, who are having difficulty in school due to health, family or social problems, with community resources? If you have a student that has a need in one or more of the following areas please give us a call: Food and clothing assistance, medical, dental or vision care, mental health, tutoring, recreational or enrichment activities, parenting classes, or child care.

RFFRC offices:

Glenwood Springs, GSES 384-6055

Carbondale, Bridges Center 384-5796

Basalt, BHS 384-5855

If you have questions or comments, please contact Info@rfsd.org or email me directly at jhaptonstall@rfsd.k12.co.us or by calling 384-6001.

